

INSIDE TODAY
WORLD NEWS

IRAN UNREST



Iranian political dissident, Ebrahim Yazdi, was arrested along with at least six other prominent anti-government activists in a new crackdown against the country's reformist movement, opposition Web sites and activists reported Monday Dec. 28 2009.

Read more on Page A7

SPORTS NEWS

VONN HURT



Defending overall World Cup champion Lindsey Vonn of the U.S. reacts with her arm in a sling after crashing in the first run of an alpine ski, Women's World Cup giant Slalom, in Lienz, Austria, Monday, Dec. 28, 2009.

Read more on Page 12



Price of a barrel of petroleum
US\$ 78.77
 ↑0.72

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Obama orders review of air safety

PHILIP ELLIOTT

Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU (AP)— Talking publicly for the first time since a failed Christmas Day plot to blow up a U.S. airliner in flight, President Barack Obama called it on Monday “a serious reminder” of the need to adapt continually to the terror threat facing the United States. Even as Obama vowed to use “every element of our national power” to keep Americans safe, word came that a U.S. State Department warning had failed to trigger an effort to revoke the alleged attacker’s visa. Officials in Yemen confirmed that the suspect had been living in that country, where an al-Qaida-affiliated group quickly sought to take responsibility for his actions.

The incident prompted stiffer



President Barack Obama speaks to the media about the recent air travel incident, Monday, Dec. 28, 2009, at the Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

Associated Press

airport boarding measures and authorities warned holiday travelers to expect extra delays as they return home this week

and beyond.

Continued on Page 4

Gay marriage in Argentina is first in Latin America

ALMUDENA CALATRAVA

Associated Press Writer

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Two Argentine men were joined Monday in Latin America’s first same-sex marriage, traveling to the southernmost tip of the Americas to find welcoming spot to wed. Gay rights activists Jose Maria Di Bello and Alex Freyre were married in Ushuaia, the capital of Argentina’s Tierra del Fuego state, in a ceremony witnessed by state and federal officials. “My knees didn’t stop shaking,” Di Bello said. “We are the first gay couple in Latin America to marry.” The couple had previously tried to marry in the Argentine capital of Buenos Aires but were thwarted by city officials citing conflicting judicial rulings. Argentina’s Constitution is silent on whether marriage must be between a man and a woman, effectively leaving the matter to state and city officials. Tierra del Fuego Gov. Fabiana Rios said in a statement that gay marriage “is an important advance in human

rights and social inclusion and we are very happy that this has happened in our state.”

An official representing the federal government’s antidiscrimination agency, Claudio Morgado, attended the wedding in the city of Ushuaia and called the occasion “historic.” Many in Argentina and throughout Latin America remain opposed to gay marriage, particularly the Roman Catholic Church.

But same-sex civil unions have been legalized in Uruguay, Buenos Aires, Mexico City and some states in Mexico and Brazil. Marriage generally carries more exclusive rights such as adopting children, inheriting wealth and enabling a partner to gain citizenship. Di Bello said the city of Ushuaia initially declined to authorize the marriage but went ahead after the couple received backing from the state of Tierra del Fuego. “We filed an administrative appeal to the government of Tierra del Fuego, which finally authorized

the wedding. A bill that would legalize gay marriage was introduced in Argentina’s Congress in October but it has stalled without a vote. Only seven countries in the world allow gay marriages: Canada, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Belgium. U.S. states that permit same-sex marriage are Iowa, Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut and New Hampshire. Di Bello, 41, an executive at the Argentine Red Cross, met Freyre, 39, executive director of the Buenos Aires AIDS Foundation, at an HIV awareness conference. Both are HIV-positive.□



In this photo distributed by the press office of Tierra del Fuego government, Alex Freyre, right, and his partner Jose Maria Di Bello, center, smile at each other during their marriage at the civil registry in Ushuaia, southern Argentina, Monday, Dec. 28, 2009. The couple’s union is the first gay marriage in Latin America.

Associated Press



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In-flight security rules eased

The Northwest Airlines plane which asked for emergency help after a passenger became disruptive upon landing taxis off a remote runway, escorted by authorities, at the Detroit Metropolitan Airport in Romulus, Mich., Sunday, Dec. 27, 2009.

Associated Press

DAVID KOENIG,
AP Airlines Writer
DALLAS (AP) — In-flight security rules have been eased after a two-day clampdown, airline officials familiar with the matter said Monday. At the captain's discretion,

passengers can once again have blankets and other items on their laps or move about the cabin during the tail end of flight. In-flight entertainment restrictions have also been lifted.

The airline officials spoke on condition of anonymity because federal safety officials had not publicly announced the changes.

Security rules were relaxed in the last 24 hours, one official said.

Tougher airline security measures were imposed Friday after a man flying from Nigeria to Amsterdam then to the U.S. on a Northwest Airlines flight tried to ignite an explosive as the plane prepared to land in Detroit. On Sunday, police met another Amsterdam-to-Detroit flight after the crew reported a "verbally disruptive passenger." A law enforcement official said the man posed no security risk to the plane.

Government officials have refused to discuss what restrictions had been put into place, but in many airports lines were longer and security personnel were extra diligent. Travelers on incoming international flights said that during the final hour, attendants removed blankets, banned opening overhead bins, and told passengers to stay in their seats with their hands in plain sight.

Authorities introduced a second layer of security at Pearson International Airport in Toronto. On Monday morning, every U.S.-bound passenger was subjected to a pat down and their luggage was inspected by hand. It took about three hours for travelers to get through the checks.

On one Air Canada flight from Toronto to New York's La Guardia Airport the crew told passengers before departure that in addition to remaining in their seats for the duration of one-hour flight, they were not allowed to use any electronic devices — even iPods — or their own headphones. The crew also told passengers that they would not be able to access their personal belongings because of the "enhanced security procedures." □



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Wild horse roundup to begin in U.S. amid protest

OSKAR GARCIA
Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A two-month capture of about 2,500 wild horses from public and private lands in northern Nevada began Monday amid protests that the roundups are unnecessary and inhumane. Federal officials said the roundup is needed because the 850 square miles of land is overpopulated and could become unlivable to wildlife and livestock within four years.

Bureau of Land Management spokeswoman JoLynn Worley said the agency began gathering horses Monday in the eastern portion of the Black Rock Range, a stretch of mountains more than 100 miles north of Reno, Nevada. A contractor was using two helicopters under BLM supervision to move the horses to corrals, Worley said. The animals were then being trucked to Fallon, Nevada, for immunizations and veterinary care, she said.

Worley said officials won't know how many horses were captured on Monday until early Tuesday. She said the agency would likely be in the

range for one week to 10 days — with a goal of capturing 250 mustangs — before moving on to the next of five areas.

Long-term plans call for the mustangs to be placed for adoption or sent to holding facilities in the Midwest. The agency said a facility in Reno was full of adoptable horses, making it unclear when the animals gathered in the latest capture could be put up for adoption. Horse defenders say the use of helicopters to drive horses to corrals is inhumane and risks their injury and death. Opponents also contend winter roundups expose horses to the risk of respiratory illness.

Program Director Suzanne Roy of In Defense of Animals said the group questions the timing of the roundup and methods that prevent public monitoring of the roundup. "It just all smells bad," she said. The California-based group has had trouble getting White House and other federal officials to work through their complaints during the holidays, she added.

About 30 protesters gathered Sunday at the entrance to Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area west of

In this Sunday, July 13, 2009 photo, a helicopter pilot rounds up wild horses from the Fox & Lake Herd Management Area in Washoe County, Nev. Dozens of wild horse advocates plan to go before a federal advisory panel here on Monday, Dec. 7, 2009 to try to persuade public land managers to change their plan to relocate thousands of free-roaming mustangs from the West to preserves elsewhere.

Associated Press

Las Vegas, waving down motorists and holding placards.

The group also planned to demonstrate Wednesday outside the San Francisco office of U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who protesters hope will sympathize with their calls for a moratorium on wild horse roundups. Other protests were being planned for Wednesday in Chicago and Denver.

Worley said the agency planned to take reporters near the corralling sites on Wednesday and was working through details for public viewing areas as the roundup moves to different areas. □



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U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano is seen in Washington, in this December 7, 2009 file photo. The system aimed at keeping air travel secure failed when a Nigerian man who was suspected of ties to militants managed to smuggle explosives aboard a flight, Napolitano said on Monday.

AIR SAFETY

Continued from Front Page
Members of Congress questioned how a man flagged as a possible terrorist managed to board a commercial flight into the United States carrying powerful explosives in a failed attempt to bring down the jetliner. Independent Sen. Joe Lieberman said Monday that the Senate Homeland

Reuters Photo
Security and Governmental Affairs Committee that he chairs would hold hearings in January. Meanwhile, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula claimed responsibility for the attack as retaliation for a U.S. operation against the group in Yemen. Yemeni forces, helped by U.S. intelligence, carried out two airstrikes against al-Qaida

operatives this month in lawless areas of Yemen, which is fast becoming a major front in the war on terror.

The second attack in Yemen occurred a day before 23-year-old Nigerian Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to bring down a Northwest Airlines flight as it prepared to land in Detroit.

Yemen long has been an al-Qaida stomping ground. But officials fear that deepening instability in the Middle Eastern nation may be giving new opportunity for the terror group to establish a base to train and plan for attacks on the West.

A statement posted on the Internet by al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula said Abdulmutallab coordinated with members of the group and used explosives manufactured by al-Qaida members.

Solving one mystery of Abdulmutallab's pre-Detroit path, the Yemeni Foreign Ministry said Monday that he

was in Yemen from August until early December. He had received a visa to study Arabic in a school in San'a. Citing immigration authorities, the statement said Abdulmutallab had studied previously at the school, indicating it was not his first trip to Yemen.

Obama, on vacation in his birthplace of Hawaii, acknowledged the attack showed the need to increase the United States' defenses. He detailed the pair of reviews that he has ordered to determine whether changes are needed in either the watchlist system or airport screening procedures. "This was a serious reminder of the dangers that we face," he said. "It's absolutely critical that we learn from this incident."

Obama's remarks Monday were the first heard from him on the Christmas Day scare three days earlier.

Officials said that was deliberate, an effort by the White House to balance the

need for the president to show concern but also not to unduly elevate a botched incident and thereby encourage other would-be attackers.

Calling the Christmas Day incident an "attempted act of terrorism," Obama vowed: "We will continue to do everything that we can to keep America safe in the new year and beyond."

"The United States will more than simply strengthen our defenses," the president said. "We will continue to use every element of our national power to disrupt, to dismantle and defeat the violent extremists who threaten us."

Back in Washington, federal officials met to review their layered system of watchlists and other procedures to examine how to avoid the type of lapses that led to the attack. Abdulmutallab's family in Nigeria released a statement that said his father had contacted Nigerian security agencies two months ago. □



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China set to execute Briton many say is unstable

By NG HAN GUAN

Associated Press Writer

URUMQI, China — China says Akmal Shaikh is a drug smuggler and must be executed Tuesday morning. But family and acquaintances say the 53-year-old Briton is mentally unstable and was lured to China from a life on the street in Poland by men playing on his dreams to record a pop song for world peace.

Shaikh first learned of his death sentence Monday from his visiting cousins, who made a last-minute plea for his life. Prime Minister Gordon Brown had spoken personally to China's prime minister about his case, but there's little to suggest Beijing will relent.

"I believe we have done everything we possibly can," said Ivan Lewis, a Foreign Office minister, after meeting with the Chinese ambassador

in London late Monday. "We urge at this very late stage the Chinese government to do the right thing."

Shaikh would be the first European citizen to be executed in China in half a century.

Two years ago, the man who relatives say used to be hardworking and devoted to family, was apparently living on the streets of Warsaw. But Gareth Saunders, a British teacher who lives in Poland, told The Associated Press Shaikh nonetheless maintained an "exaggerated positivism" that Saunders called both endearing and sad.

Saunders, who was one of the last people to see Shaikh before his arrest and who knew him as a colorful local character, said he helped out the fellow Brit by buying him coffee and singing backup when Shaikh

insisted on recording his song for world peace, "Come Little Rabbit."

"He thought he had a gift with his voice, but it was clear to anyone listening he had no sense of timing, nothing," said Saunders, who was put in contact with reporters by Reprieve, a London-based prisoner advocacy.

The group, which has been lobbying for clemency for Shaikh, said he was duped into trafficking drugs to China by men promising that he would attain fame with a hit single.

"He would've believed that for sure, about having a big hit in China," said Saunders.

The two last ran into each other in a Warsaw underpass when Shaikh told Saunders that he was going to a country in central Asia and would be back in a couple of weeks.

"I think it's absolutely



This undated handout photo taken in Warsaw, Poland and issued by Reprieve on Monday Dec. 28, 2009 shows Akmal Shaikh a Briton scheduled to be executed in China for drug smuggling.

Associated Press

disgraceful," Saunders said of the death sentence. "I don't think he's in a position to defend himself."

Shaikh was arrested in 2007 for carrying a suitcase with almost 9 pounds (4 kilograms) of heroin into China on a flight from Tajikistan. He told Chinese officials he didn't

know about the drugs and that the suitcase wasn't his, according to Reprieve.

He was convicted in 2008 after a half-hour trial. In one court appearance during his trial and appeal process, the judges reportedly laughed at his rambling remarks. □



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Israel to build 700 apartments in east Jerusalem



A Palestinian construction worker works at a new housing development in the Jewish neighborhood of Har Homa in east Jerusalem, Monday, Dec. 28, 2009. Israel said Monday that it will build nearly 700 new apartments in east Jerusalem, drawing tough criticism from both the Palestinians and the United States, which denounced the plan as an obstacle to peacemaking.

Associated Press

KARIN LAUB,
Associated Press Writer
RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Israel announced Monday it is building nearly 700 new apartments for Jews

in east Jerusalem, where Palestinians hope to set up the capital of a future state. The U.S., Palestinians and the European Union condemned the plan, a fresh setback to

American efforts to restart Mideast peace talks.

The Palestinians have said they will not resume talks without an Israeli settlement freeze, and criticized what they said was another show of bad faith by Israel.

“With each individual action it undertakes on the ground, Israel is saying no to meaningful negotiations,” said Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat. President Barack Obama’s Mideast envoy, George Mitchell, who is trying to find a formula for reviving negotiations, is due in Israel and the West Bank in the second week of January.

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said the U.S. “opposes new Israeli construction in east Jerusalem” and that neither side should take steps that

pre-empt the outcome of talks. He urged both sides to restart negotiations without preconditions.

Sweden, which holds the rotating European Union presidency, said Israel’s latest plans “prevent the creation of an atmosphere conducive to resuming negotiations on a two-state solution.”

Israel insists the Jewish neighborhoods in east Jerusalem are not settlements, but part of its own capital, a view disputed by the international community.

The plan announced Monday takes the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu into new political territory, by initiating construction for Jews in east Jerusalem. Up to now, the government has been saying it was endorsing plans already in the pipeline. Israel’s Housing Ministry confirmed that the new construction bids are Netanyahu’s first in east Jerusalem.

A partition of Jerusalem — with Jewish neighborhoods going to Israel and Arab neighborhoods to a future Palestine — would likely be part of any peace deal. Palestinians say that with each expansion of Jewish areas, the Arab portion of the

city is shrinking and partition becomes more difficult.

Netanyahu said he was willing to get back to talks immediately, telling a group of Israeli ambassadors: “Israel wants peace.”

Israeli-Palestinian talks broke off a year ago. After coming to power nine months ago, Netanyahu withdrew key promises made to the Palestinians by his predecessor, including a willingness, in principle, to discuss the future of Jerusalem.

About 300,000 Israelis live in West Bank settlements and another 180,000 in east Jerusalem, areas claimed by the Palestinians for their state. Under U.S. pressure, Netanyahu agreed to slow new housing construction in the West Bank, though construction of more than 3,000 houses there continues.

The Israeli leader refuses to stop building in east Jerusalem, captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast War and annexed. He says he will not cede any part of the city.

Successive Israeli governments have put up sprawling Jewish neighborhoods around east Jerusalem, and Monday’s decision would build in three of them: Pisgat Zeev, Har Homa and Neve Yaakov. □

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Iranian authorities holds bodies of slain protesters

CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA

Associated Press Writer

CAIRO (AP) — Iranian authorities said Monday that they were holding the bodies of five slain anti-government protesters, including the nephew of the opposition leader, in what appeared to be an attempt to prevent activists from using their funerals as a platform for more demonstrations.

Pro-reform Web sites and activists said the government also detained at least eight prominent opposition figures — including a former foreign minister — in an intensified crackdown that could fuel more violence of the kind that engulfed the center of Tehran on Sunday. The activity pushed the bitterly opposed camps beyond any immediate prospect of reconciliation or compromise. Hardliners, including clerical groups and the elite Revolutionary Guard, issued statements urging the country's judiciary to take action against the opposition for violating Islamic principles and insulting the head of Iran's religious leadership, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

In the bloodiest protests in months, groups of emboldened demonstrators on Sunday chanted slogans against Khamenei, casting aside a taboo on personal criticism of the leader. In outbursts of fury rarely seen in past street confrontations, they burned squad cars and motorcycles belonging to security forces who had opened fire on the crowds, according to witness accounts, opposition Web sites and amateur videos posted on the Web.

"I believe we are moving toward a more militarized and repressive confrontation. Things are going to get worse," said Ahmad Bakhsayesh, a political science professor at Tehran's Allameh Tabatabaei University.

IRNA, Iran's state-run news agency, said the bodies of five protesters, including the nephew of opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, were being held pending autopsies. The family of the nephew, Ali Mousavi, alleged

that he was shot by security forces or government-backed militiamen, and his funeral would likely galvanize another outpouring of opposition anger.

The nephew's brother, Reza Mousavi, earlier said the body was taken overnight from a Tehran hospital.

"Unfortunately, they have taken the body of my brother from the hospital, and however much we search, we can't find the body," Reza Mousavi had told the reformist Web site Parlemannews.ir.

Islamic tradition calls for bodies to be buried within 24 hours of death.

The opposition has alleged that Mousavi's nephew had received death threats in recent days and was shot by assassins who drove to his house. Reformists believe the killing was an attempt to pressure Mousavi to back down, and that the government took his nephew's body to prevent mourners gathering in the street for his funeral.

Iranian state television reported that eight people died in the violence in Tehran, a higher toll than the five deaths reported by some opposition Web sites. The television also cited the Health Ministry as saying 60 people were injured, and many had been released from hospitals after treatment. Independent confirmation of the casualties was virtually impossible because of state restrictions on media coverage of the upheaval that has gripped Iran since a disputed election in June. Iranian authorities have said 300 people were arrested in the protests, but did not specify where they were detained. The opposition Jaras Web site said several hundred were arrested in Tehran, and a similar number were detained in the central city of Isfahan.

Tehran residents say limits on Internet access have been tightened since Sunday, and Iranians were unable to see opposition Web sites. Cell phone and text messaging services were sporadic. Communication problems are common around the time of demonstrations, likely a government bid to prevent negative publicity and disrupt

coordination among protesters. The Parlemannews.ir site said three Mousavi aides were detained Monday, including top adviser Ali Riza Beheshti. Security forces also arrested two people in a raid on a foundation run by the reformist former President Mohammad Khatami, a foundation official said on condition of anonymity because of fears of police reprisal. The Baran Foundation works to promote dialogue between cultures.

Former Foreign Minister Ebrahim Yazdi and human rights activist Emad Baghi were arrested, according to the Rah-e-Sabz Web site. Yazdi, who served as foreign minister after the 1979 Islamic revolution, is now leader of the banned but tolerated Freedom Movement of Iran. One of his aides was also detained.

Bakhsayesh, the Tehran professor, said the best way to defuse the crisis was for Khamenei to ask Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a former president close to the reformists, to mediate between the two sides. He said Khamenei's absolute support for President Mahmoud



This photo, taken by an individual not employed by the Associated Press and obtained by the AP outside Iran shows Iranian protesters beating police officers, during anti-government protest in Tehran, Iran, Sunday, Dec. 27, 2009.

Associated Press

Ahmadinejad, who is accused of stealing the election from Mousavi through massive vote fraud, was proving costly for the supreme leader.

Mahdi Karroubi, an opposition figure who also ran in the election, asked how the government could spill the blood of its people during commemorations of Shiite Islam's most important observance, Ashoura. The observance commemorates the seventh-century death in battle of one of Shiite Islam's most beloved saints, and it

conveys a message of sacrifice in the face of repression.

He told the opposition Rah-e-Sabz Web site that even the government of the shah, overthrown in the 1979 Islamic Revolution, respected the holy day. Comparing a rival to the shah is a serious, though common, insult in Iranian politics.

The government crackdown drew sharp criticism from the West, which is already locked in a dispute with Iran over its suspected efforts to develop nuclear weapons. □

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PALM BEACH - STEINFELD presents WOW factor! at the MAGIC LIVE!® ...theater-of-illusions show, Westin - Aruba opened on December 25 at 9PM. MAGIC Live!® theater-of-illusions show, starring Adam Steinfeld... is an amazing night of Magic, Grand Illusions and Comedy, superb magic at it's

highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live! theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage. In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

then the sections are taken away, one by one, until the girl vanishes completely... right before your eyes! Then as if that isn't enough to run to your local optometrist, he re-assembles the box for the magicbabe to make a triumphant reappearance. It's an all new original illusion not seen anywhere else in the world. I went back to see the show during rehearsals, and still couldn't figure out the secret. Tourists and local fans will remember Steinfeld for past performances, in Aruba,

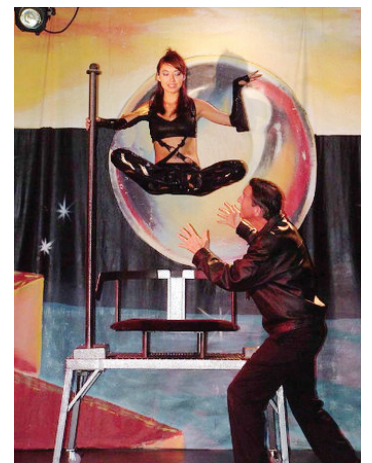
IF YOU GO

What: Magic Live! theater-of-illusions show
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.5 adults
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and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new england mystery writer Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film. The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach, Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX

OFFICE tickets are located in main lobby. Purchase TICKETS AT THE DOOR. SEE MAGIC, comedy and "seemingly impossible feats, get ready to marvel at the all new, MAGIC! theater-of-illusions show starring ADAM STEINFELD, opens DECEMBER, 25, nightly 9PM at the WESTIN, aruba. MAGIC LIVE! theater-of-illusions show....at the WESTIN-Aruba, 9pm nightly, starring AdamSteinfeld. □



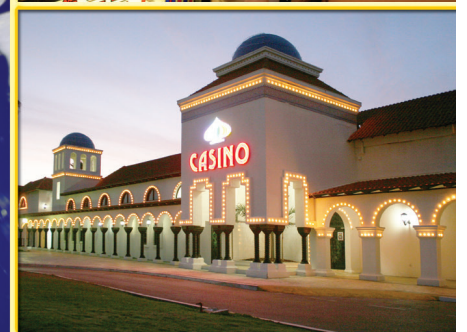
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Stocks edge higher as shoppers step up spending

By SARA LEPRO
and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK – Better holiday sales and rising commodities prices pushed stocks to their sixth straight gain and new highs for 2009.

Major indexes edged higher in light trading Monday after sales figures showed shoppers spent more freely this holiday season, a sign that consumers are feeling better about the economy.

Figures from MasterCard Advisors' SpendingPulse, which track all forms of payment, show retail sales rose 3.6 percent from Nov. 1 through Dec. 24, compared with a 2.3 percent drop a year ago. Adjusting for an extra shopping day between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the number was closer to a 1 percent gain.

Consumer spending is one of the biggest drivers of economic growth and is vital to a sustained recovery.

Meanwhile, commodities prices rose as the dollar fell, giving a boost to energy and materials stocks.

Airline stocks fell, helping to keep the rest of the market in check, after two security incidents on Northwest flights this weekend. The Dow Jones transportation average fell 0.6 percent.

With fewer traders in the market due to the holidays, and without any bad news, analysts say stocks are likely to drift higher during the final days of 2009.

"What's going to stop this is a question on a lot of people's minds," said Lawrence Creatura, portfolio manager at Federated Clover Investment Advisors. "And the answer so far is nothing."

Markets were closed for Christmas and will be closed again Friday for New Year's Day.

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 26.98,

or 0.3 percent, to 10,547.08, its highest close since Oct. 1, 2008. The Dow transportation average fell 24.37, or 0.6 percent, to 4,163.49.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 5.39, or 0.2 percent, to 1,127.78, and the Nasdaq composite index advanced 5.39, or 0.2 percent, to 2,291.08.

Bond prices came off their lows after an auction of \$44 billion of two-year notes saw sufficient demand. Bond prices have been falling in recent weeks, pushing yields higher as stocks continue to advance amid improving economic data.

In total, the Treasury Department is issuing \$118 billion of debt this week. Investors have worried this year that demand for government debt would wane amid the massive amounts of supply. But so far, most auctions have gone smoothly. The yield on the previously auctioned 10-year Treasury

note, which moves opposite its price, rose to 3.85 percent from 3.80 percent Thursday. Stocks added to moderate gains from last week, when major indexes ended at new highs for the year following upbeat reports on unemployment and durable goods orders. This week, readings on home prices and consumer confidence are among the few economic reports expected.

Stocks have managed to grind higher throughout December, but the gains have been more subdued than in recent months as investors have held back on making big moves going into the end of the year. The Standard & Poor's 500 index is up 66.5 percent since hitting 12-year lows in March.

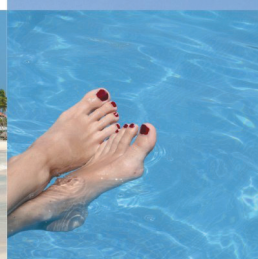
Many investors are starting to consider industries that have underperformed the broader market during the rally, as well as companies that are likely to do well even if the economy grows at a slower pace than anticipated.



FILE - In this Dec. 26, 2009 file photo, Delores Simmons, of Dorchester Mass., stands next to her cart after shopping in Framingham, Mass. U.S. stock futures crept higher Monday, Dec. 28, 2009, as investors returning from a long holiday weekend were heartened by good news on retail sales.

(AP Photo/Adam Hunger, file)

"2009 was a very kind year. Most industries, most stocks went up," Creatura said. "In 2010, equities will have to earn their valuation." □



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In 911 call, woman says Sheen threatened her

ASPEN, Colo. – A woman who identified herself as the wife of Charlie Sheen said in a 911 call to Aspen police that the actor threatened her with a knife and that she feared for her life. Police released the audio

of the call on Monday, three days after Sheen was arrested on suspicion of menacing, second-degree assault and criminal mischief. Authorities haven't identified the accuser, but the woman on

the 911 call says her name is Brooke and that her husband is Charlie Sheen. Sheen is married to Brooke Mueller Sheen. The woman can be heard weeping and sometimes her words are inaudible.

At one point she says, "My husband had me (inaudible) with um, with a knife, and (inaudible) he threatened me." Later, she says, "I thought I was gonna die for one hour." An ambulance was sent to



the house but police say no one was taken to the hospital.

The 44-year-old Charlie Sheen is free on \$8,500 bond. His lawyer and his agent didn't immediately return calls on Monday. Sheen stars in CBS' "Two and a Half Men."

Chief Deputy District Attorney Arnold Mordkin said Monday the menacing charge is the most serious, usually carrying a sentence of two to eight years in prison and a fine of \$2,000 to \$500,000. Mordkin said Sheen's next court appearance is Feb. 8, and no decision on whether to prosecute him is expected until shortly before that. □



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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



Defending overall World Cup champion Lindsey Vonn of the US reacts with her arm in a sling after crashing in the first run of an alpine ski, Women's World Cup giant Slalom, in Lienz, Austria, Monday, Dec. 28, 2009. Vonn lost balance on a bump after a sharp left turn and fell backwards, hitting a gate and losing a ski. She stood up after lying down for almost 10 minutes and receiving first aid, put her skis back on and headed down the hill with her left arm in a sling. "My arm really hurts," she said as she climbed into a waiting ambulance. "I don't know what has happened. I believe it's broken."

Associated Press

American star Vonn crashes at World Cup GS

ERIC WILLEMSSEN

Associated Press Writer

LIENZ, Austria (AP) — Olympic favorite Lindsey Vonn had her left lower arm put in a splint following a crash on the opening run of a World Cup giant slalom on Monday, but was expected to start in a slalom race the following day.

Vonn suffered no broken bones in the fall, according to Richard Quincy, the U.S. team medical director, and doctor Eduard Sporer from Lienz district hospital.

"It's not a classic broken wrist," said Sporer, who added that the skier had a bruised bone with swelling in the nearby area but that Vonn would be able to race in the slalom.

Vonn underwent X-ray and MRI scans at the hospital before the doctor gave the all clear. She then returned to the United States team hotel.

"She's got a lot of pain now but if she feels well she could start (Tuesday)," Sporer said. Quincy confirmed that the scans showed no fractures, only a bone bruise. Vonn's arm was placed in a splint that would enable her to ski in Tuesday's slalom.

"The bone almost broke. It has tiny stress fractures inside and massive internal bruising and swelling," Thomas Vonn, Lindsey's husband, wrote in an e-mail to The Associated Press. "Basically what it means is she can ski as soon as she can handle the pain. She will be testing it out (Tuesday morning) to see if she can race in the slalom."

Vonn skipped the mandatory public bib draw Monday evening and was represented by teammate Kaylin Richardson.

Vonn started 15th in the GS and made a couple of mistakes in the early part of her run, falling more than a second behind the leading time set by Kathrin Hoelzl of Germany. After a sharp left turn, the

American lost her balance on a bump and fell backwards, hitting a gate and losing a ski. The two-time World Cup overall champion remained down for almost 10 minutes receiving first aid. Vonn eventually stood up, put her skis back on and made it to the bottom of the hill with her left arm in a sling.

"My arm really hurts," Vonn said as she climbed into an ambulance and headed to the hospital. "I don't know what has happened. I believe it's broken."

Trevor Wagner, the technical coach of the U.S. team, said Vonn was still considering racing the slalom.

"I'm going to talk to her, but it's up to her," Wagner said.

U.S. women's speed coach Alex Hoedlmoser was not at the race but was with Vonn for training the past two days.

"It was just a bumper, I guess, and it looked worse than it was," Hoedlmoser said.

With the Olympics looming, Hoedlmoser suggested skipping the slalom would be a good idea.

"It definitely would make sense looking at the bigger picture for her to rest for a couple of days," he said. □

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Northwestern among four newcomers to AP Top 25

By **JIM O'CONNELL**
AP Basketball Writer

It usually isn't big news when a team from the Big Ten moves into The Associated Press' college basketball poll. It is when that team is Northwestern.

The Wildcats moved into the poll on Monday at No. 25, their first appearance in the rankings since January 1969, when it was still just a Top 20.

With Kansas again a runaway No. 1, as it has been since the preseason poll, the top eight teams remained the same for the third straight week.

The Jayhawks (11-0), who beat California 84-69 in their only game last week, received 52 first-place votes from the 65-member national media panel.

Texas (11-0), which beat Michigan State 79-68 last week for its second straight win over a top 10 team, was No. 1 on 11 ballots and remained second, while Kentucky (13-0) had one first-place vote and was third.

Purdue (11-0) was fourth, followed by Syracuse (12-0) — which had the other first-place vote — West Virginia (10-0), Duke and Villanova.

North Carolina and Connecticut both moved up a spot to round out the top 10.

Northwestern (10-1) has won nine straight games since a loss to Butler. The Wildcats, the only team from a BCS conference to never play in the NCAA tournament, were ranked for three weeks during the 1968-69 season. They made the poll only two other times: for one week in 1954-55; and seven weeks in 1958-59.

Three other teams moved into the rankings this week. No. 22 Florida State (11-2) and No. 23 Wisconsin (10-2) were both ranked for one week earlier this season. UAB (11-1) moved in at No. 24, the Blazers' first ranking since the final poll of 2005-06.

Butler, which lost to UAB last week, dropped out from No. 20. The Bulldogs (8-4) were 11th in the preseason poll and were ranked in the six previous regular-season polls. The other teams to fall out were all ranked for the last four weeks: No. 18 Florida (8-3), No. 19 Texas A&M (9-3) and No. 25 Gonzaga (8-3) all moved into the Top 25 four weeks ago.

Michigan State fell two spots

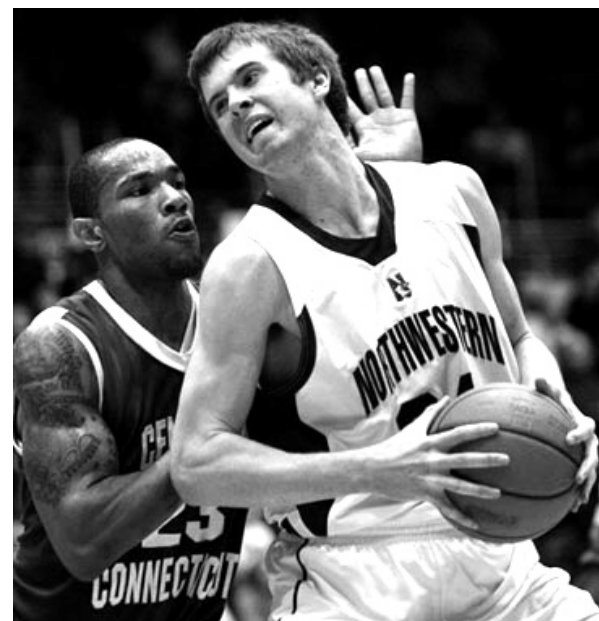
to 11th and was followed by Kansas State, Georgetown, Tennessee, Ohio State, Mississippi, Washington, Temple, New Mexico and Texas Tech.

The bottom five ranked teams were Clemson, Florida State, Wisconsin, UAB and Northwestern.

New Mexico (12-1) had the week's biggest fall, dropping six places to 19th after a 75-66 loss at Oral Roberts. □

Northwestern's John Shurna, right, drives to the basket against Central Connecticut State's David Simmons during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game in Evanston, Ill., Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2009. Northwestern won 74-54.

Associated Press



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NBA Roundup

Baron's buzzer-beater leads Clips past Celtics

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Baron Davis hit a long, fallaway jump shot at the

Los Angeles Clippers' Baron Davis hits the game winning shot while being guarded by Boston Celtics' Rajon Rondo and Ray Allen to defeat the Celtics 92-90 in an NBA basketball game on Sunday, Dec. 27, 2009, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

buzzer as the Los Angeles Clippers dramatically snapped the Boston Celtics' nine-game road winning streak with a 92-90 victory on Sunday.

Rajon Rondo scored 20 points for the Celtics, but missed two potential go-ahead free throws — actually three, including another that was waved off — with 1.5 seconds left in just the Celtics' second loss in 16

games.

Davis had 24 points and 13 assists for the Clippers, who snapped a three-game losing streak.

Rasual Butler hit a dramatic tying 3-pointer off a drive-and-dish pass from Davis with 8.5 seconds left.

Kevin Garnett had 12 points and eight rebounds while playing mostly on the perimeter with a sore back for the Celtics, whose three-game winning streak ended two days after their impressive Christmas victory over the Orlando Magic. Boston managed just two points in the final 3:30.

At New York, Tony Parker scored 22 points, Manu Ginobili added 17, and the duo made the key plays in the final minutes to power San Antonio to a victory over New York.

Tim Duncan finished with 13 points while being outplayed by David Lee, but Parker and Ginobili combined for all of San Antonio's points after the game was tied at 84 with under 3½ minutes remaining. The Spurs won for the eighth time in 10 games following a three-game skid earlier this month.

In other NBA games it was Toronto 102, Detroit 95; San Antonio 95, New York 88; Cleveland 108, Houston 83; Miami 114, Indiana 80; Dallas 104, Denver 96; and L.A. Clippers 92, Boston 90. □

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NHL Roundup

Kane lifts Blackhawks past Predators 5-4

CHICAGO (AP) — Patrick Kane scored his second goal of the game with 43.4 seconds to play to cap a wild third period Sunday and lift the Chicago Blackhawks to a 5-4 victory over the Nashville Predators. John Madden scored twice in the third for the NHL-leading Blackhawks, who beat Nashville on consecutive nights to open an eight-point lead in the Central Division over the second-place Predators.

Chicago (26-9-3) trailed 2-1 entering the final period, went up 4-2, let Nashville tie it and then finally won on Kane's team-high 15th goal.

Brian Campbell also scored for Chicago. Marcel Goc, Martin Erat, Dan Hamhuis and Cody Franson scored for Nashville.

Maple Leafs 4, Penguins 3

At Pittsburgh, defenseman Ian White broke a tie with 1:22 to play with his third goal in four games and Toronto held off Pittsburgh.

White beat Marc-Andre Fleury with a slap shot from the right point.

Lee Stempniak had a goal and two assists, and Luke Schenn and Jason Blake also scored for Toronto. Sidney Crosby, Mike Rupp and Matt Cooke scored for the Penguins, who lost in regulation for only the third time since Nov. 27.

Canucks 5, Flames 1

At Calgary, Alberta, Mason Raymond scored three times in a 14:15 span for a natural hat trick, and Roberto Luongo made 29 saves for Vancouver. Raymond scored twice in a 34-second span late in the first period to give Calgary a 4-1 lead, and completed the hat trick on a power play at 12:31 of the second.

Henrik Sedin and Kyle Wellwood also scored for Vancouver. Jarome Iginla scored his 20th goal for Calgary.

Flyers 2, Islanders 1

At Uniondale, New York, Jeff Carter snapped a second-

period tie as Philadelphia beat the New York Islanders for the 13th straight time, 2-1.

The Flyers, who have won three in a row overall for the first time in two months, haven't lost to the Islanders since Feb. 12, 2008. It is the longest active streak in the NHL, one win more than Washington's current 12-game run over Tampa Bay. Danny Briere also scored, and Michael Leighton made 28 saves.

Jon Sim scored for the Islanders.

Bruins 2, Panthers 1

At Sunrise, Florida, Marco Sturm broke a tie early in the third period, Michael Ryder also scored, and Tim Thomas made 25 saves for Boston. Dominic Moore scored for Florida. Scott Clemmensen started in goal in place of Tomas Vokoun, the Florida regular who shut out the Bruins in their last two meetings.

Sabres 5, Blues 3



Chicago Blackhawks' Patrick Kane celebrates after scoring in the final minute of the third period of an NHL hockey game against the Nashville Predators in Chicago, Sunday, Dec. 27, 2009. The Blackhawks won 5-4.

Associated Press

At St. Louis, Tim Connolly scored twice in Buffalo's three-goal third period and had an assist, and Mike Grier also had two goals and an assist as Buffalo beat St. Louis.

Jochen Hecht added a goal for the Sabres, down 3-2 after two periods. Alex Steen scored

twice, and Eric Brewer added a goal for St. Louis.

In other NHL games it was, Philadelphia 2, N.Y. Islanders 1; Boston 2, Florida 1; Buffalo 5, St. Louis 3; Toronto 4, Pittsburgh 3; Chicago 5, Nashville 4; Vancouver 5, Calgary 1. □

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Patriots, Bengals clinch playoff spots; Giants out

By BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

New England and Dallas are back in the playoffs. The New York Giants are out. And both AFC wild-card spots are still up for grabs.

Tom Brady and the Patriots returned to the postseason with a performance worthy of the team of the decade, a 35-7 rout of Jacksonville on Sunday. Also back after a one-year absence is Green Bay, which secured an NFC wild-card berth with a 48-10 victory over Seattle.

Cincinnati clinched the AFC North with its 17-10 win over Kansas City, and the Cowboys grabbed the final NFC playoff spot by beating Washington 17-0 on Sunday night. That eliminated the Giants, who were routed by Carolina 41-9 and missed the postseason after starting 5-0.

Following their 30-27 victory over Denver, the playoff-bound Philadelphia Eagles (11-4) will play at Dallas (10-5) for the NFC East title next Sunday.

The AFC wild-card scramble got even more complicated with Baltimore's 23-20 loss at Pittsburgh. When the Jets spoiled the Colts' unbeaten season 29-15, it pushed New York into the driver's seat for a wild card, along with the Ravens. Both are 8-7 and with wins next week over Cincinnati and Oakland, respectively, they will go to the postseason.

Tennessee (7-8) was eliminated Sunday.

New Orleans was stunned 20-17 in overtime by Tampa Bay, preventing the NFC South champion Saints from clinching home-field advantage throughout the conference playoffs. But the Saints still could get that by winning at Carolina next weekend.

Already into the postseason were Arizona, winner of



New York Giants quarterback Eli Manning (10) fumbles the ball after sliding head first in the third quarter against the Philadelphia Eagles during an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 13, 2009, in East Rutherford, N.J. The play was ruled a fumble and the Eagles recovered.

the NFC West; Minnesota, which owns the NFC North title; Philadelphia, assured at least a wild card; San Diego, champion of the AFC West; and Indianapolis, winner of the AFC South.

Brady threw four touchdown passes, three to Randy Moss,

and the young defense put together its third straight solid game for New England (10-5). The Patriots clinched the AFC East title after missing the playoffs last season for the first time since 2002 despite an 11-5 record.

Brady bounced back after

throwing for just 307 yards with two touchdowns and two interceptions in his previous two games. He completed 23 of 26 passes for 267 yards, reminiscent of his brilliance the last time the teams met — 26 of 28 for 262 yards with three touchdowns and

no interceptions in a 31-20 divisional playoff win on Jan. 12, 2008.

"It's big, believe me. ... It's been a long journey for us," Brady said. "You start out in the beginning of January last year not making the playoffs. ... We put a lot into it over the course of these 12 months and it really pays off when it goes the way you hope it does."

Green Bay (10-5) had four interceptions of Matt Hasselbeck. The Packers have surged after a 4-4 start.

Several Packers players, including Charles Woodson and Greg Jennings, acknowledged fans during a lap around the stadium after the game.

"I don't think you could ask for a better day," Ryan Grant said. Carson Palmer's touchdown pass to Chad Ochocinco completed a 98-yard drive in the closing minutes for Cincinnati to conclude a rough week. The Bengals (10-5) moved into the playoffs for only the second time in the past 19 years after dealing with the death of receiver Chris Henry.

"To win this game, no matter how ugly, makes you closer as a team," defensive lineman Tank Johnson said, wearing a gray division champion baseball cap. "Winning makes everything feel better — a broken leg, a broken heart."

In Sunday's NFL games it was: Atlanta 31, Buffalo 3; Houston 27, Miami 20; Green Bay 48, Seattle 10; Carolina 41, N.Y. Giants 9; Pittsburgh 23, Baltimore 20; Tampa Bay 20, New Orleans 17, OT; Cleveland 23, Oakland 9; Cincinnati 17, Kansas City 10; New England 35, Jacksonville 7; San Francisco 20, Detroit 6; Arizona 31, St. Louis 10; N.Y. Jets 29, Indianapolis 15; Philadelphia 30, Denver 27; and Dallas 17, Washington 0.

Nev. orders urine tests for Pacquiao, Mayweather

TIM DAHLBERG

AP Boxing Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The head of the Nevada boxing commission ordered Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr. to submit to urine tests Monday as a way of trying to break the impasse that has threatened to derail their proposed March 13 megafight. Pacquiao and Mayweather must submit to the tests within 48 hours or face possible fines or suspension by the Nevada Athletic commission. "That at least starts the ball rolling," said Keith Kizer, the commission's executive director. The tests, which were ordered by commission chairman Pat Lundvall, fall under an out-of-competition testing regulation which went into effect last year and allows state boxing authorities to order boxers to comply. Kizer said about 30 of the tests have been ordered in the last 18 months. The commission's demand comes a day after Pacquiao promoter Bob Arum said he would not budge off a proposal to do just three blood tests on the two fighters — and none within 30 days of the fight. Arum, who

had suggested the NAC decide next month who will prevail in the dispute, said he planned to begin negotiating a fight with Paul Malignaggi if Mayweather's camp didn't agree to the terms. But Mayweather's manager, Leonard Ellerbe, said Monday there would be no fight on Arum's terms, and charged the promoter with trying to shift the blame for the fight not happening from Pacquiao's side to Mayweather. "If he's unwilling to do random blood and urine it's a nonstarter," Ellerbe told The Associated Press. "He knows that. If they want to walk away from the richest fight in the history of the sport, that's their decision." Kizer said the urine tests could play a part in breaking the impasse, though Mayweather's camp has said that blood tests are necessary to find performance-enhancing drugs that may not be detected by urine tests. Mayweather backed off earlier on a demand for the tests to be conducted by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency but has insisted all along that they be done randomly and include blood tests within 30 days before the fight. □



Dutch Hero Becomes National Pride

By Peter Valk and Jasper Fakkert

WOERDEN, Netherlands—Dutchman Jasper Shuringa who reportedly prevented the terror suspect from blowing up the Northwest Airline jet with 289 passengers on board, is being cheered in the Netherlands as a new national hero. The 32-year-old film director's act of bravery has made the down-to-earth Dutch proud as peacocks. "We are extremely proud of him but also really shocked because in one second it could have ended up very differently," Jasper's parents were reported as saying by Dutch media. Headlines in the Netherlands largest newspaper 'De Telegraaf', read "Dutch Jasper Overmasters Terrorist" and "Decoration for Hero Jasper Schuringa." Other news articles in the Netherlands also focus on how "Dutch Jasper" is praised in American media.

Dutch Minister Wouter Bos spoke with Jasper over the phone and expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Dutch government.

Casa Tua Barcelona waitresses Alejandra and Charmaine are pictured treating the famous DJ Tiesto to a fabulous dinner at the popular Casa Tua Barcelona in the heart of downtown Oranjestad.

After a fantastic dinner, the most popular DJ on the planet DJ Tiesto took nearly 5,000 fans to all heights during Kaleidoscope World Tour 2009 at Surfside Beach Next To "HAVANA BEACH CLUB!"



Jasper himself seems rather sober about his part: "I just jumped. I didn't think. I went over there and tried to save the plane," he said in an interview with CNN. Jasper was born in Curacao, a former Dutch colony in the Caribbean though his family often moved, globetrotting for his father's job with the Shell Oil firm.

Besides Curacao, Jasper and his family lived in Oman, the Netherlands and Gabon, where they had to flee with help of the French foreign legion when the civil war broke out there. After secondary school he graduated from a film academy in Miami. Currently, he runs a video company called "Go With The Flow Productions." In addition to the praise

from politicians, friends, and media, Jasper, in one fell swoop, has acquired some 2,500 followers on social networking site, Facebook. Jasper Schuringa is now staying in Miami with a friend and is not expected to return to the Netherlands until January 8. But when he does he can count on a festive welcome

DJ Tiesto enjoys Casa Tua Barcelona



The little candle light in my heart

By: Roland W. Peterson

There is a little
candle light
that I kindle
in my heart
It's always with me
and nothing
do us part

But today I am
going to give it
to you
So that you can
keep it
with you

So that you
can always light
your way
and never
be afraid
of the dark
anymore

Some day
you will share
it with another
you love
so that they
can continue
to pass it on
so that the
whole world
will be in light

So kindle
that little light
in your heart
Never ever
let it go out

Broadway star Kiril Kulish does the Sushi Samba at House of Japan



PALM BEACH - Staying on Aruba to dance the lead in Leonid Kozlov's "The Nutcracker" at the Occidental Grand Resort is young Kiril Kulish, who with his fellow "Billys" made history by winning the Tony award for Best Male Performer 2009 in this year's Best Musical "Billy Elliot."

Busy with rehearsals, Kiril is trying to take some time to enjoy Aruba's many amenities, but one on which Leonid, a part time resident of Aruba

with his wife Adriana insisted upon, was having dinner at one of his favorite restaurants in Aruba, House of Japan in the South Beach Mall.

House of Japan opened a few months ago, and they have employed the skills of master sushi chef Kasuki Tsuchiya to create a menu unique to their establishment; a fusion of classic Japanese and the flavors of the Caribbean.

Kiril, an admittedly avid sushi fan,

was mightily impressed by the stunning boat of various rolls created for him by the masterful Mylene, a veteran sushi chef known to many patrons from Sakura and La Cabana.

"I told Kiril if we ate at any one restaurant in Aruba during his visit, it had to be this one," reports dance master Leonid, former principle dancer of the Bolshoi and New York City Ballet. "I have traveled and performed nearly everywhere in the world and sampled sushi in every place I have visited. House of Japan, in my opinion,

has the best."

Kiril agrees, and was delighted with some hereto untried house specialties, such as their Neptune Salad, and was particularly taken by their unique House of Japan Ceviche. House of Japan staff was very excited to have the award winning star in their restaurant, and Kiril happily signed autographs and posed for pictures with owner Kanaan Baroud, Chef Mylene and Manager Juan as well as having a big smile and hug for outstanding server Vanessa. □



Life's a beach at the Lazy Lizard



Palm beach – The Lazy Lizard is a one stop shop before you hit the waves. Designed to stimulate your shopping instincts, the beautiful store

is hard to resist. What you'll find at the new South Beach Centre on Palm Beach, just a few steps away from the Hard Rock Café, is absolutely



gorgeous: hand picked gifts, souvenirs, beach and resort wear, for women, men and kids. It's all on display from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day.



The tastefully arranged store is signature Jodi Tobman, the Boston-born retailer at the helm of Salamander Holdings family of fun stores, The Juggling Fish, The Coconut Trading Co., T.H. Palm & Company & The Lazy Lizard. You will find a great selection of children's gifts here. In fact an entire store section is dedicated to gifts

with a tropical appeal for babies and toddlers, among them whimsical plush stuffed iguanas, parrots and seahorses. Moreover, a bonanza of fridge magnets, hand-made silver jewelry, batik beach wraps, throws, bags and hats awaits you. Tel.: 586 6206. For more information you may write to: orders@salamanderholdings.com □





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Aruban investors concerned

Feds probe links between lawmakers, Allen Stanford

ORANJESTAD - Just hours after federal agents charged banker Allen Stanford with fleecing investors of \$7 billion, the disgraced financier received a message from one of Congress' most powerful members, Pete Sessions.

"I love you and believe in you," said the e-mail sent on Feb. 17. "If you want my ear/voice — e-mail," it said, signed "Pete."

The message from the chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee represents one of the many ties between members of Congress and the indicted banker that have caught the attention of federal agents.

The Justice Department is investigating millions of dollars Allen Stanford and his staff contributed to lawmakers over the past decade to determine if the banker

received special favors from politicians while building his spectacular offshore bank in Antigua, McClatchy Newspapers has learned.

Agents are examining campaign dollars, as well as lavish Caribbean trips funded by Stanford for politicians and their spouses, feting them with lobster dinners and caviar.

The money Stanford gave Sessions and other lawmakers was stolen from his clients while he carried out what prosecutors now say was one of the nation's largest Ponzi schemes.

Sessions, 54, a longtime House member from Dallas who met with Stanford during two trips to the Caribbean, did not respond to interview requests.

Supporters say the lawmaker, who received \$44,375 from Stanford and his staff, was

not assigned to any of the committees with oversight over Stanford's bank and brokerages.

His press secretary, Emily Davis, said she was unable to comment on the e-mail sent at 11:31 a.m. on the day Stanford was charged by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. "I haven't seen it, so I can't verify its authenticity at this time," she said.

Found on the servers

But the message found on

Stanford's computer servers and the contributions he made to Sessions and other lawmakers — totaling \$2.3 million — are now part of the government's inquiry.

Records show Stanford also doled out \$5 million on lobbying since 2001, setting up his own Washington firm last year with expensive furnishings and artwork — the money plundered from his customers' accounts.

Over the years, he took on battles to protect his banking

network while fending off regulators.

In 2001, he pressed successfully to kill a bill that would have exposed the flow of millions into his secretive offshore bank in Antigua.

The next year, he helped block legislation that would have drawn more government scrutiny to his bank.

While he was fighting reforms to financial secrecy and offshore banking laws, Stanford was hobnobbing with dozens of lawmakers. □

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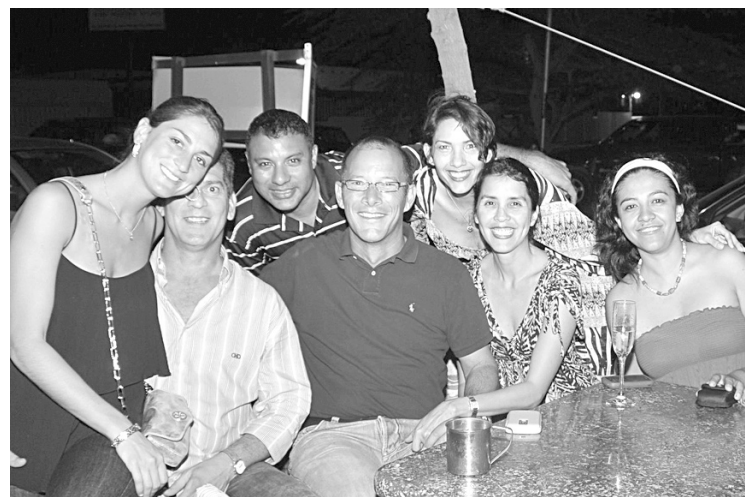
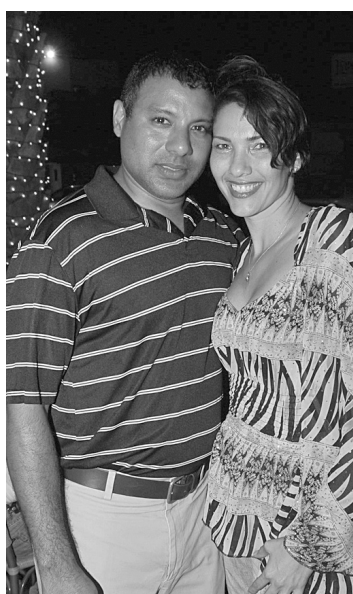
In the Paseo Herencia Mall

Lincoln Gomez celebrates "in style"

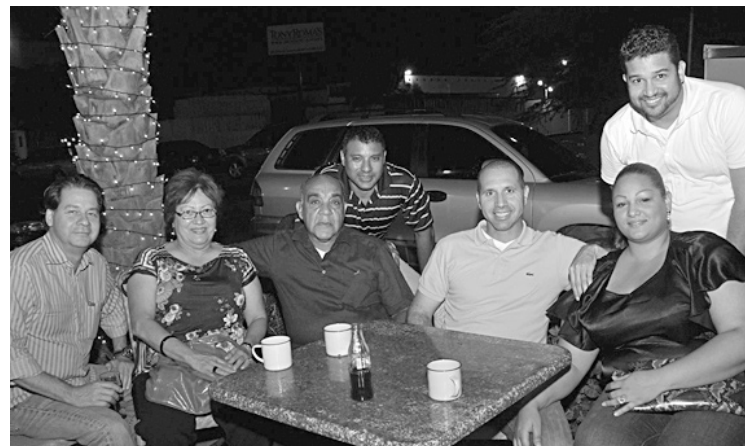
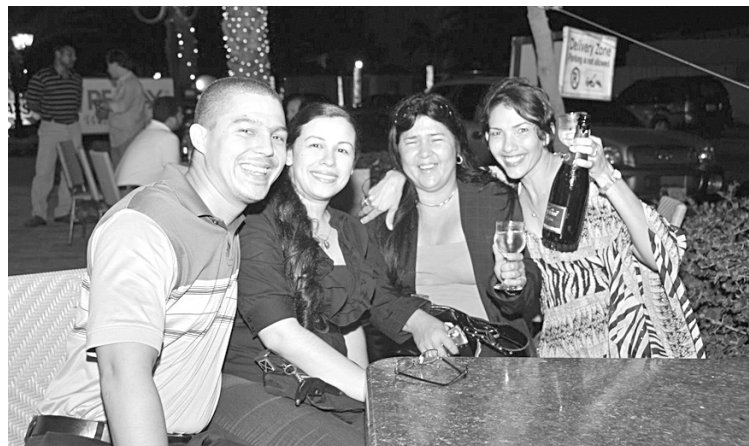
At Moby Dick's outside grill terrace



PASEO HERENCIA – Last evening, Lawyer Lincoln Gomez and his wife Gigiola celebrated with several dozen friends at the outside grill at the popular seafood restaurant Moby Dick's in the Paseo Herencia Mall. The new grill is one of the popular new places for both locals and



tourists to enjoy great food straight from the grill and wonderful libations. Lincoln D. Gomez, father of two adorable little boys, is admitted to the Bar in both Aruba and in the Netherlands Antilles. He holds degrees in Biology and Chemistry from Saint Leo University, Tampa,



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Nuñe 10-D



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Florida and law degree from the Universiteit van Aruba. He is co-founder and managing-partner of Gomez & Bikker www.gobiklaw.com. His practice concentrates on Aruba corporate law, intellectual property, aviation finance & registration, labor law, real estate and civil litigation. He is an author and lecturer on Aruba and Netherlands Antilles law. His publications are in the areas of: the Civil Code of Aruba, labor laws, intellectual property, aviation finance and corporate law. □



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casino:

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casino:

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casino:

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Maria M. De Cuba

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casino:

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Cheriline Donata

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casino:

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MAREK T. ZAWADZKI

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casino:

SEAPORT CASINO



SIGFRIED FRASER

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casino:

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Adriano Perez

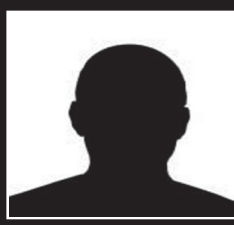
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casino:

CRYSTAL CASINO



Lendle Ryan Stewart

November 11th, 2009

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FORD MUSTANG

casino:

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AMIR MACHMUD

May 15th, 2009

Mystery Bonus Jackpot:

FORD MUSTANG

casino:

CRYSTAL CASINO



MARTA LUCIA KOOLMAN

May 20th, 2009

Mystery Bonus Jackpot:

SUZUKI SWIFT

casino:

SEAPORT CASINO



JUAN THOMAS LOEFSTOP

June 4th, 2009

Mystery Bonus Jackpot:

FORD MUSTANG

casino:

CRYSTAL CASINO



ROY KUNST

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HUMAN HINTS

Fundamentals 2 – Your Imagination Directs Your Emotion

Yesterday we discussed the importance of knowing your goals for living a conscious, purposeful life. Today we will explore how to use our Imagination to align our Emotions and our physical bodies toward our goal.

We know what we want. The next step is to align our emotions toward that goal. When our emotions are aligned, we become open to accept new possibilities that resonate with the way we feel. Emotions do not know

about Time. They think everything is the Now. Even if we suffered trauma a lifetime ago, the thought of the event can bring back powerful memories and cause our bodies to react as if the trauma is happening right now. If a thought about the past can affect our present bodies, so can a thought about the future.

Specifically, think about your self living in the future of your dreams. Focus on the physical and emotional sensations aroused by your

new life. Make your desired future real in your mind. Imagine yourself in a situation, and focus on what it feels like. Your imagination will elicit an emotional response in your physical body, which will begin to draw your physical world toward what is in your mind.

Your body and the three dimensional world react to your thoughts. When you think about your future, the sensations and emotions are stored as vibration in each strand of DNA within each cell of your present physical body. The common vibration sets up a powerful standing wave that changes the timing and synchronicity in your life in order to bring about the future you imagine yourself living.

Think and feel as if your dreams are a reality, and the three dimensional world will

reflect your thoughts. Don't act as if your dreams have come true until they have. Action before its time is usually not helpful. We need to be patient with the time delay in three dimensional transformation. Our lives will change, but in their own time, regardless of our schedule.

Our thoughts affect our bodies because different thoughts produce different hormones, and our hormones affect the synchronicity of our three dimensional lives. Our hormones are a bridge between thought and matter.

Enough theory. Tomorrow we take three dimensional action. We will discuss how to set goals and take action.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email


each day.

~**Quentin Danziger**


Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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		matinee: 12.30	2.45	
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	daily: 4.45		
		matinee: 12.15	2.30	
R	THE BLIND SIDE	daily: 5.45	8.30	
		matinee: 12.00	2.45	late show: 11.30
R	NINJA ASSASSIN	daily: 7.00	9.15	
		late show: 11.45		
PG	OLD DOGS	daily: 4.15	6.15	8.15
		matinee: 12.15	2.15	late show: 12.15
PG-13	2012	daily: 4.45	8.00	
		matinee: 1.30	late show: 11.15	
PG	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOOM	daily: 9.00		
		late show: 11.45		
PG-13	AVATAR 3D	daily: 4.30	7.45	
		matinee: 1.15	late show: 11.00	3D

AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	daily: 4.45	7.00	NEW
		matinee: 12.15	2.30	late show:
PG-13	TERUG NAAR DE KUST	daily: 6.45	9.15	NEW
		late show: 11.45		
PG	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	daily: 9.00		
		late show: 11.45		
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	daily: 4.30		
		matinee: 12.00	2.15	late show:
PG-13	2012	daily: 5.00	8.15	
		matinee: 1.45	late show: 11.30	
PG-13	DID YOY HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS	daily: 5.00	7.30	9.45
		matinee: 12.30	2.45	late show: 12.00
PG-13	AVATAR 3D	daily: 4.45	8.00	
		matinee: 1.30	late show: 11.15	3D
R	ARMORED	daily: 5.30	7.45	9.45
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Experience Papillon's gripping story! Introducing a catching special for the early Birds

Papillon at The Village, across from the Radisson Resort, is a most unusual restaurant: having been named after Henri Charrière, France's most notorious escaped convict, its design is 'prison-style' chic. Cozy, elegant yet casual, it offers the best possible quality products, superb French wines and European seasonal delicacies, like mussels, white asparagus and game. The restaurant is best-known for its French-Caribbean cuisine, its excellent service and quest for perfection. The mellow, French music in the background will surely increase your appetite!

Celebrating its first successful year in business at The Village, Papillon has introduced its Early Bird dinner. Popular from the start, this is a three-course, classy dinner at a most affordable price. Get a taste of Papillon's cuisine from 5.00 until 7.00 pm and come back again and again to enjoy the restaurant's regular menu. Papillon's great staffers are very pleased to advise you which wine will enhance your dinner.

Henri Charrière, called 'Papillon' because of the butterfly tattoo on his chest, would never have thought that he would be the inspiration for this unique restaurant on Aruba. He has captured the imagination

of millions when he wrote the gripping, shocking story of his conviction, but now his nickname is a synonym for a superb evening out underneath the stars.

Bon appetite!

Opening hours

Papillon's opening hours are from 5 pm until midnight. The restaurant's daily specials will be explained by the staff. For reservations, please call 586 5400 or go to www.papillonaruba.com.

Papillon Restaurant is located in The Village, just across from the Radisson Resort.

Papillon
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Environmentalist paddles 1600 kilometres

WILLEMSTAD - An environmental activist from Curacao, Ryan de Jongh, has paddled more than 1600 kilometres in a kayak to raise awareness for the environment. He also raised money for a marine biology science institute threatened with closure.

The journey began at the beginning of this month on the Netherlands Antilles island of St Maarten and ended in Curacao on Sunday.

During the 22-day trip, he visited 17 Caribbean islands.

Photo by René Roodheuvél



Ryan de Jongh

Plunge into our turquoise ocean for the New Year!

'Unox Nieuwjaarsduik' at MooMba Beach will be a televised affair

MOOMBA BEACH - Freezing cold water, lots of shivering bodies and shattering teeth hurting from the cold: nothing of the above is expected to happen to you when you join the Unox Nieuwjaarsduik (New Year's plunge), held at MooMba Beach on January 1st.

On Aruba the water temperature is lovely, the sun is shining and guiding in the New Year with a plunge into the ocean is no hardship at all. So why not join the fun and the many people who are going to jump into the turquoise water, joining the thousands upon thousands others who are doing the same all over the world, but then in conditions one would not enjoy at all!

This first MooMba Unox Nieuwjaarsduik has an added benefit: not only do you get rid of any hangover you might have from

partying till early morning on the 31st, you get a bowl of Unox Erwtensoepp with sausage as well.

This Dutch traditional pea soup will heat you up after your plunge and it will have you in terrific shape for more partying in no time flat.

One more thing: the Nieuwjaarsduik will be filmed by ATV, one of the local television stations and shots of the plunge will be sent to Holland and who knows, to other countries as well. So if you want to make everyone at home sick with jealousy when they see your lovely, toned, bronzed body, come to MooMba Beach on January 1. At noon, 12 o'clock sharp, the signal for the plunge is given and swimmers will be racing off towards the ocean seeking eternal fame. □



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Brand Champions lauded at The Westin Resort, Aruba



PALM BEACH -- Westin associates are passionate that every reservation is an opportunity to meet the unique needs of guests on a personal level. They are empathetic, empowered, professional and unobtrusive. They go out of their way to provide personal

touches and personalized services to 'surprise and delight' every guest. Each month, associates are nominated by management for not only meeting Westin standards, but exceeding them on a daily basis. Recently, a lunch reception was held to

honor the nominees for the month of November.

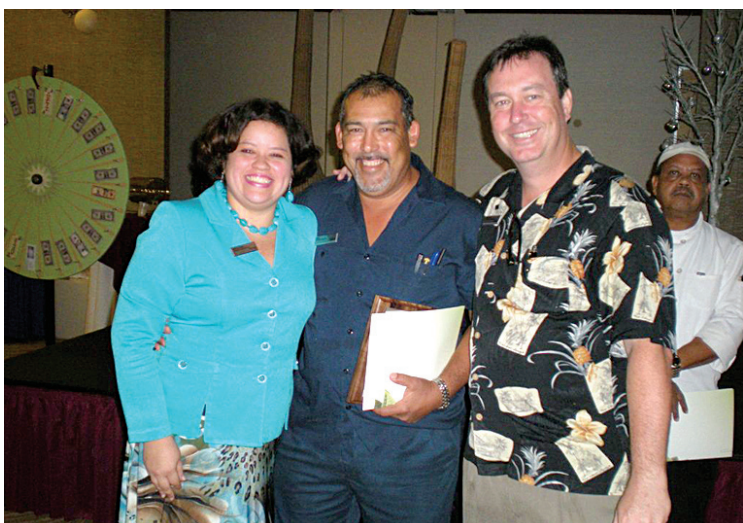
For the Front of the House, Robert Frank Bermudez was chosen as the Brand Champion for his performance in the Luggage Assistance department. Frank has earned this distinction on numerous occasions, and this most recent

award was presented based on his exemplary efforts during the SITE convention held in November, where he was praised by the delegates for his professional attitude and his genuine care for the guests of the convention.

The winner from the Heart of the House was Mike Croes from Engineering. Mike is an example of true team spirit and is one of the reasons

why the Westin associate culture is one of support and caring, which creates a great work environment for all. In addition to Mike's daily tasks within his department, he is also someone that can be counted on to help outside of his regular responsibilities.

He pitched in during the recent Manager & Supervisor of the Quarter celebration, and also took special time and care to decorate for a fellow colleague's farewell party. Congratulations to the winners and nominees. □



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Catch your own dinner

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Let down enough

“The Friendly Island” appears to have celebrated a relatively quiet Christmas. Perhaps it was because the wet weather kept more people inside, but few incidents other than traffic accidents were reported in any case on the Dutch side.

But as tranquil as the holiday season has been up to now and hopefully will continue, the New Year promises to be an intense one, with the much-talked-about constitutional reforms finally coming to fruition and St. Maarten preparing to take on country status. The transfer to the Island Territory of tasks now handled by the Central Government is scheduled to start from January 1 as the dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles begins in earnest.

Preparing for that takes financial and human resources for which help is indeed needed from both Willemstad and The Hague, but it's also about the island taking on more responsibility and doing what it takes to shoulder it. That is a mental question as much as it is a material one, and it's important to keep in mind that more autonomy first and foremost translates to added responsibility.

Along with greater authority, country status also means increased accountability, as soon there will be no more Central Government to blame. St. Maarten will need to gather all its strengths and work on its weaknesses to ensure a healthy start of the new country.

The fact that there will be not one, but most likely two elections in the first seven months of the year does not make things any easier. In their drive to campaign and get elected, local politicians should not lose sight of the historic moment in which the island finds itself and should continue to work to make it a success, whether in government or opposition.

Ultimately, it's about the future of St. Maarten and its children; our children. Both have been let down more than enough. □

Police arrest four suspects for Busquet homicide and robbery

PHILIPSBURG--The police have arrested four persons in connection with the December 12 armed robbery and killing of businessman Jean Claude Busquet at “Bumpercar Rides” in Simpson Bay.

In a statement issued by the Prosecutor's Office last night through police spokesman Inspector Ricardo Henson, the suspects were identified as 19-year-old A.C. and 26-year-old D.F. of Guyana, and 33-year-old D.E. and 23-year-old J.P. of Jamaica.

Henson said three of the suspects held were believed to have been “directly involved in the robbery” while the fourth “has been arrested as a suspect in receiving items that were stolen during this robbery (fencing).”

“With the arrest of these four persons, the key suspects in the involvement of the death of Busquet are presently in the hands of the police and Justice Department. ... The investigation is still ongoing and more arrests are not excluded,” Henson explained.

He said several search warrants had been executed during the investigation and

items confiscated during those searches still had to be investigated. All four suspects have already appeared before the Judge of Instruction and the investigation is ongoing.

Following Busquet's murder, an investigating team comprising members of the local police force, the police force of Curaçao, and Dutch Royal Marechaussees under the instruction of the Kingdom Detective Cooperation Team RST was formed.

Noting that intensive investigations based on “very close cooperation between the different departments” had led to the four suspects being arrested, Henson explained, “The intention of all departments involved was to have this case solved before the Christmas holidays,” and that was exactly what had taken place.

He explained further that the Prosecutor's Office and the other police departments had decided that with regard to any homicide investigation, a separate investigation team would be formed to track and apprehend the suspect(s) involved.

Such a team was formed for

the first time to investigate the David Eustace murder case. That investigation is still ongoing and the Police Force and Prosecutor's Office “are doing their utmost to have this case solved.”

Henson said the arrests in the Busquet case in recent days in the run-up to Christmas “are

the first signs that the new approach will definitely lead to good results.” He said the arrests were also indicative that, contrary to the past, “The chance for suspects involved in very serious and violent criminal activities to escape being captured has diminished.” □

Marlin wonders when budget will be debated

PHILIPSBURG--Democratic Party (DP) Councilman Roy Marlin on Sunday said it was “a shame” that the government of St. Maarten will be going into 2010 without an approved budget.

Marlin said for all the talk of the National Alliance-led government about how crucial a year 2010 will be for the island and its people, having no budget “gives kingdom partners more opportunities to put St. Maarten in the light of not being ready for constitutional change.”

Marlin said the members of the Island Council have received no indication from the Executive Council if the Committee for Financial Supervision (CFT) had given a reaction to the submitted draft budget. “When exactly are we going to look at the budget?” Marlin asked.

He recalled that the CFT had given the Executive Council two deadlines to submit a budget, the DP had an uphill battle to get a Central Committee meeting called on the said budget, and there was still no indication when a public discussion on the budget will take place.

“It is a shame,” Marlin said. “I can't recall the last time we went into a new budgetary year without a budget to speak of. This is not the way we are supposed to be starting the year in which we are scheduled to obtain country status, with no direction how or on what we will be spending,” Marlin said. □



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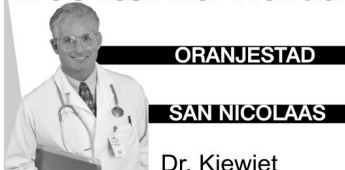
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2BDRM	RL 60		\$40,000.	GROUND FL

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Chávez denuncia que Colombia y EEUU planean agresión militar



El presidente venezolano, Hugo Chávez, durante una rueda de prensa sobre el calentamiento global en Copenhague, dic 18 2009. REUTERS/Christian Charisius

CARACAS (AP) - El presidente Hugo Chávez denunció el lunes que Estados Unidos y Colombia planean simular el ataque a un territorio venezolano para desacreditar su gobierno y

justificar una mayor agresión contra Venezuela.

“Desde Colombia el imperio yanqui, utilizando fuerzas militares de Colombia, están preparando una agresión contra Venezuela”, dijo Chávez durante un saludo de fin de año a las tropas en el estado Zulia, fronterizo con Colombia.

“El gobierno de Colombia convirtiéndose en instrumento del gobierno de Estados Unidos, pretendiendo desestabilizar a Venezuela, pretende generar un caos... pretenden frenar con ello no sólo la revolución venezolana... sino la revolución en América Latina”, agregó.

El gobernante se refirió a las repetidas denuncias de Bogotá en torno a la supuesta presencia de rebeldes de las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC, en Venezuela y sus pedidos de darle captura a los insurgentes.

“Desde hace varias semanas comenzó la guerra verbal contra Venezuela, diciendo que aquí tenemos escondidos no sé cuántos jefes guerrilleros... que en Venezuela hay campamentos guerrilleros protegidos por el gobierno venezolano, lo cual es absolutamente falso y lo hemos demostrado”, enfatizó. Detalló que Bogotá “está preparando lo que llaman allá un ‘falso positivo’”, algo que según el líder venezolano “se ha hecho costumbre de las fuerzas militares de Colombia y del gobierno de Colombia”. Según Chávez el “falso positivo” en Colombia consiste en “secuestrar grupos

de jóvenes... se los llevan a una montaña, los matan y después que los matan los visten de campaña, les ponen unos fusiles en las manos... y con el apoyo de los medios de comunicación controlados por ellos... entonces presentan aquello como un gran éxito del gobierno (de Uribe) contra la guerrilla”.

“Con ello preparan el terreno para lanzar un ataque sobre el territorio venezolano, simulando un campamento”, señaló.

“No sería extraño que ellos, que matan tanta gente en Colombia, maten no sé que gente y cuánta gente, los traigan a territorio venezolano en una montaña, construyan allí unas chozas, un campamento improvisado, coloquen allí fusiles, propaganda, y digan ahí está el campamento guerrillero en Venezuela”, conjeturó.

El ministro de Defensa colombiano Gabriel Silva ha dicho que en Venezuela estarían no sólo comandantes de las FARC como Luciano Marín Arango, alias “Iván Márquez”, sino además “un grupo adicional de mandos de las FARC y del ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional)”.

Las autoridades colombianas no han revelado detalles sobre cómo conocen de esa presencia insurgente en Venezuela. Los gobiernos de Venezuela y Colombia se mantienen distanciados desde julio pasado luego que Chávez decidiera “congelar” las relaciones en protesta por el acuerdo militar que acordaron Bogotá y Washington. □

Chile enviaría martes datos presunto espionaje a Perú

SANTIAGO (Reuters) - Chile entregaría el martes a Perú una nota verbal y un informe con antecedentes vinculados a la denuncia peruana de un supuesto caso de espionaje en favor de Santiago, mientras que el Fiscal Nacional descartó por ahora abrir una investigación en esta materia.

El ministro de Relaciones Exteriores chileno, Mariano Fernández, dijo el lunes que el envío de los datos es parte del proceso formal, luego de que Lima denunció que un agente de la Fuerza Aérea de Perú (FAP) espía para Chile en el 2002.

“Probablemente mañana estemos dando respuesta como corresponde (a Perú)... va una nota verbal acompañada del informe del fiscal”, dijo a periodistas Fernández. El supuesto espía, detenido hace más de un mes y acusado de enviar información militar reservada a Chile, había trabajado en la embajada peruana en Santiago hace siete años.

Poco antes de que Fernández se refiriera al caso, el Fiscal Nacional Sabas Chahuán dijo que no está confirmada ninguna identidad

en el supuesto caso de espionaje. El fiscal agregó que tras la entrega de su informe con los antecedentes solicitados por Perú al Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores no hay nada más pendiente.

“En lo que nos compete técnicamente no corresponde por ahora abrir ninguna investigación con los antecedentes que se nos enviaron desde Perú. No corresponde”, dijo Chahuán. Pese a las declaraciones del fiscal chileno, el embajador peruano en Santiago, Carlos Pareja, dijo que Perú aún puede insistir enviando información más detallada sobre el presunto espionaje.

“Nosotros podemos remitir mucha más información, más pormenorizada, para ver si se da con estas dos personas o si hay mérito para abrir una investigación. Nosotros lo que debemos es insistir remitiendo la mayor información posible”, afirmó desde Santiago a la radio peruana RPP.

Por otro lado, el canciller chileno aclaró que no es labor de su ministerio investigar o realizar actividades ligadas a las peticiones de otros países, como la del supuesto espionaje.

Informan disminución de desplazados en Colombia

BOGOTÁ (AP) - Los casos de desplazamiento forzado en Colombia disminuyeron en el 2009 en un 56%, lo que equivale a que 40.713 familias menos que en el año anterior, según un informe presentado el lunes por Acción Social, la agencia presidencial que registra y atiende las víctimas de este fenómeno. La base de datos de la entidad registró que el año pasado 71.815 hogares fueron expulsados violentamente de sus lugares de residencia, mientras que en 2009 fueron reportados 31.102. □

Presidente Colombia llama “bufones” y “ladrones” a FARC

Por exigencia para entrega de rehenes

BOGOTÁ (Reuters) - El presidente de Colombia, Alvaro Uribe, llamó el lunes a las FARC ladrones y bufones, después de que exigieron un protocolo de garantías para liberar a dos militares secuestrados y exigió la entrega inmediata de los rehenes sin descartar un rescate armado. Las Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) anunciaron desde abril la liberación del sargento Pablo Emilio Moncayo y del soldado Josué Daniel Calvo, así como la entrega de los restos del oficial de la Policía Nacional Julián Ernesto Guevara, muerto en cautiverio.

“El Gobierno, como en todos los casos, había dado todas las garantías, accedido a todos los requerimientos para que liberaran a Moncayo y a Calvo”, dijo el mandatario en declaraciones a una radio de la ciudad de Ibagué.

Uribe recordó que su Gobierno desistió de una exigencia inicial para que la guerrilla liberara en forma simultánea a 24 efectivos de las Fuerzas Armadas secuestrados y que buscan intercambiar por cientos de rebeldes encarcelados.

“¿Cuál fue la respuesta de estos bandidos después de que el Gobierno accedió a todo? La respuesta de estos bandidos fue el secuestro y asesinato del Gobernador del departamento

de Caquetá -qué tristeza- que nos trajo tanto luto en estas navidades”, sostuvo el mandatario.

“Y estos bandidos son cínicos, hablan como que fueran unos arcángeles, pretenden que los colombianos ignoremos que acaban de asesinar al Gobernador del Caquetá. ¡Tras ladrones bufones! Lo que tienen que hacer es poner en libertad a Moncayo y a Calvo y a todos los secuestrados”, insistió.

De acuerdo con personas cercanas al proceso de liberación de los rehenes, el secuestro y asesinato del Gobernador del Caquetá, Luis Francisco Cuéllar, demorará la entrega por la desconfianza que generó el crimen en el Gobierno que se lo atribuyó a las FARC.

La senadora del Partido Liberal Piedad Córdoba se refirió a la exigencia de la guerrilla y dijo que es positivo porque comprueba que el proceso continúa y no está paralizado. “Eso indica que el proceso de liberación no está parado, que está caminando. Hay unas observaciones normales y lógicas como los protocolos de seguridad que permitan dejar en claro cómo se debe proceder en los términos de liberación”, afirmó.

El Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja dijo que sigue trabajando en absoluta

discreción con todas las partes para definir la logística que permita la entrega de los militares. El Gobierno de Colombia aspira a que Brasil sea el país que facilite la logística para la entrega de dos militares secuestrados por las FARC y para la devolución de los restos del oficial Guevara. Brasil cuenta con la experiencia después de que en febrero facilitó los helicópteros y las tripulaciones que recibieron en la selva a cuatro efectivos de las Fuerzas Militares y dos políticos que permanecieron secuestrados por años.

Moncayo, secuestrado por las FARC hace 12 años, se convirtió en uno de los rehenes más antiguos del conflicto interno de más de 45 años que se registra en Colombia y ganó protagonismo a nivel internacional por las caminatas de su padre, el profesor Gustavo Moncayo, para exigir su liberación. □



El presidente de Colombia, Alvaro Uribe, en una ceremonia en Bogotá, 3 dic 2009. REUTERS/Jose Miguel Gomez/Archivo

Dos muertos y miles de evacuados en provincia de Buenos Aires

BUENOS AIRES (AP) - Dos personas murieron y al menos 3.000 fueron evacuadas a raíz de las lluvias caídas en los dos últimos días al norte de la provincia de Buenos Aires, donde la localidad de San Antonio de Areco resultó particularmente afectada.

Un niño de 10 años y un joven de 19 murieron ahogados en las crecidas aguas del arroyo que cruza la localidad de Pergamino, informaron los bomberos a medios de prensa.

En San Antonio de Areco unas 3.000 personas tuvieron que abandonar sus viviendas. El desbordamiento del Río Areco contribuyó a anegar zonas del casco histórico de la ciudad y vastos campos de los alrededores, donde se prevé que vuelva a llover en las próximas horas.

La intendente de dicha localidad, Estela Lennon, dijo el lunes a Radio 10 que podía observar a unos cien metros de la plaza principal como el agua circulaba

“a una velocidad alta, como si fuera un río torrentoso”. Uno de los edificios que sufrieron las consecuencias de las inundaciones es el Museo Ricardo Güiraldes, de tradición campesina. En tanto, una ruta que conduce a la ciudad permanece cortada debido al anegamiento del agua.

Las autoridades investigan si varios canales construidos de forma irregular por productores rurales en sus campos para verter la acumulación de agua en el río contribuyeron a provocar las inundaciones. En la localidad de Salto, hay más de 400 evacuados por el desbordamiento de un río, informó al canal de televisión Todo Noticias Juan Carlos Godoy, jefe de Bomberos de la localidad.

El Servicio Meteorológico Nacional mantiene una alerta meteorológico por tormentas severas para siete provincias de Argentina, entre ellas la de Buenos Aires. □

Alan García cuestiona “angustia” de Evo Morales

LIMA (AP) - El presidente Alan García cuestionó el lunes la aparente angustia del mandatario de Bolivia Evo Morales lo que genera políticas que mantienen en la pobreza al país altiplánico rico en gas natural. “Hay que salir del razonamiento de la escasez angustiosa ... miren al vecino del sur de los andes, que tiene todo su gas guardado porque se va a acabar y entonces está en la pobreza”, dijo García a empresarios al comentar una ley que busca incentivar la creación de fábricas en zonas altoandinas. “No haga nada con el gas porque se va a terminar. Esa es la lógica, un poco del angustiado, pero esa angustia es de él, no es del país”, precisó García, en posible referencia a Morales, pero sin mencionarlo. □

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